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January 4, 1993

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20554

FCC MAIL ROOM

Sirs:

Does the airwaves belong to the people or those who use it to make a profit?

Why are broadcasters who interrupt their programs for 15 to 20 minutes every hour for commercials also allowed to scramble their signal and sell the program again? I can understand such as HBO being allowed to charge for their programs, they don't have commercials and consumers shouldn't expect such services free but if we must watch their commercials that they have already collected from the advertisers then this service should be free.

Why are cable companies allowed to charge a flat rate for a group of TV channels? Vista Communications sells 24 channels in two (2) groups for \$27.46 and state this rate is to increase. These 24 channels does not include any of the "pay" channels. Of the 24 channels for which I pay \$27.46 I only want 12 of them, why can't I be allowed to buy what I want for \$13.73? If the cable company can block out HBO, Disney, Showtime, etc. why can't they block out what I don't want and I be allowed to buy just what I want.

May I tell you about the greedy SOB's that run Vista Communications. On April 23, 1987 Southeastern Cable installed cable in Rentz, Georgia for the first time. The fee was \$11.00. I bought their service plus HBO for \$10.00 - total bill per month \$21.00. In October 1989 Southeastern ~~split~~ sold out to Vista. In March the price went up to \$14.95 plus \$10.00 for HBO. I canceled HBO. They started charging me a franchise fee - I don't have a franchise! In October 1991 they (Vista) increased their rate to \$20.95 for basic services (no pay channels). In October 1992 they increased their fee to \$27.46 (no pay channels included). Now they state they plan to increase the fee again.

Don't tell me to drop the service. I don't know what happens but before cable I received broadcast TV stations from 50 to 75 miles away with preamplifiers as well as cable. Now I can't pick up a cold wave! I'd buy a satellite dish but I understand everything is scrambled and you have to pay a monthly fee to buy the stations that broadcast commercials about as much as programs.....

Don't the law allow you people to tell these pirates their days are over!

  
S. L. SchellP. O. Box 34  
Rentz, GA 31075No. of Copies rec'd 2  
List A B C D E

**Question:** What is the length of a programming contract?

**Answer:** It varies, but generally ranges from three to seven years.

**Question:** What payments and increases in payments are required under a programming contract?

**Answer:** Each service requires a per month, per customer payment. The increases over the term of our current and proposed programming contracts range from 40% to over 90%.

**Question:** During the term of a programming contract, can a cable company delete the service from its cable system if required or requested by a community?

**Answer:** NO!

**Question:** During the term of a programming contract, can a cable company let its subscribers pick and pay for only those services they want to receive?

**Answer:** (a) No - a la carte pricing is not permitted.  
(b) A group or cluster of services, generally referred to as a tier, can in some cases, be packaged for a single price. However, if less than a certain percentage of all subscribers elects to subscribe to the tier, **then under most programming contracts, the fees will increase by up to 300%.**

**Question:** **Are the rates charged by the programming suppliers controlled or regulated at any level?**

**Answer:** NO!

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**Question:** If programming rates continue to sky rocket, and if the programming contracts contain these types of provisions\* (i.e. no a la carte pricing, penalties for failing to meet minimum percentages of subscribership, no right to terminate carriage during the term, etc.), what are the cable company's options?

**Answer:** Your cable company can and will try to negotiate the best terms possible to allow the most programming flexibility for our customers at the lowest possible rates. However, if the cable company continues to resist the programming suppliers' attempts to impose contracts with little flexibility and with rate schedules which effectively provide the programming suppliers with guaranteed and ever-increasing levels of revenue, **the programming suppliers can terminate the cable company's right to distribute their services.**

**Question:** What would happen if a programming supplier terminated the cable company's right to continue to distribute their service to its subscribers?

**Answer:** The cable company would use its best efforts to replace that service with a service not previously carried as part of its channel line up.

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453 19th. Avenue  
Brick N.J. 08724-2640  
Dec. 30, 1992

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JAN 11 1993

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Sirs:

I want to protest the rate increase of the cable company that I have, Storer Cable service, 751 Brick Blvd. Brick, N.J. 08723.

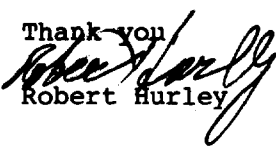
I do not understand why they need to increase the rates when they have lowered what the service give us. I have found three home shopper services on this system. They get paid to air them, why should I have to pay for something I don't want to see when they are getting paid to show them.

I have also noted that Storer Cable has the same programs on two stations at the same time. Channel 2, channel, 4 and channel 5, I have found the same programs on other channels at the same time.

I am not a sports minded person but, many times, I have found seven or eight sports programs on at he same time. I have MTV, I do not want MTV but, it is part of the package. If storer can charge more money for this service, as they call it. I feel I should have a choice as to what programs I have to pick from.

I am amoung many that looks forward to the day that I can tell Store to get their cable the hell out of here and go with AT & T.

Thank you

  
Robert Hurley

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